

Scoping Summary

Banks Lake Drawdown Environmental Impact Statement Columbia Basin Project, Washington

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Pacific Northwest Region
Ephrata Field Office
Ephrata, Washington

November 2001

Scoping Summary

Banks Lake Drawdown Environmental Impact Statement Columbia Basin Project, Washington

Banks Lake is operated as a re-regulation reservoir for the Columbia Basin Project (CBP). The reservoir is approximately 27 miles long and contains slightly more than 1 million acre feet of water at full pool. The water supply for the reservoir is stored behind Grand Coulee Dam and is lifted from Franklin Delano Roosevelt Reservoir into Banks Lake. Water is delivered into the Main Canal at Dry Falls Dam on the southern end of Banks Lake and from there delivered to approximately 670,000 acres. This is just over one-half of the authorized lands for the CBP. Reclamation currently operates the reservoir in the top 5 feet of the pool between elevations 1565 and 1570.

Action 31 of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion (BO) issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on December 21, 2000, calls for the assessment of operation of Banks Lake at up to 10 feet below full pool beginning in August of each year to enhance flows in the Columbia River during the juvenile outmigration of salmonid stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act. An annual lowering in August to elevation 1560 (10 feet below full pool) would constitute a change in how Banks Lake has been operated over the last 20 years. After August 31, refill would continue as currently allowed under existing authority.

The purpose of this project is to enhance the probability of meeting target flows in the Columbia River at McNary Dam during the juvenile outmigration of Endangered Species Act listed salmonid stocks by altering the August drawdown of Banks Lake from elevation 1565 down to elevation 1560, in compliance with Action No. 31 of the Reasonable and Prudent Alternative of the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion, issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on December 21, 2000.

A Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on altering existing operations at Banks Lake to provide for an annual drawdown of up to 10 feet from full pool and an announcement of public scoping meetings appeared in the *Federal Register* on April 25, 2001. A meeting notice describing the project, requesting comments, providing a return postage paid envelope, and announcing the date, time, and location of the public scoping meeting was mailed to over 300 potentially interested individuals, groups, and governmental agencies. A press release announcing the public meetings was sent to area media. Copies of the Notice of Intent and meeting notice are attached to this document.

Reclamation held a scoping meeting Tuesday May 15, 2001, in Coulee City, Washington. Reclamation presented background information and described preliminary alternatives being considered for the drawdown of Banks Lake and provided opportunities to ask questions, identify issues and concerns associated with the preliminary alternatives or identify other alternatives for

the drawdown. About 55 people attended the meeting. Oral comments were recorded on flip charts. Comment sheets and postage-paid return envelopes were provided. In addition to comments received at the meetings, 34 comment letters were received in time to be included in this comment summary document.

The nature of the comments ranged from brief comments or questions to detailed statements. This document summarizes comments received to date. Some comments concern actions or issues that are outside the scope of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and are listed at the end of this summary. The remaining comments will be considered by the EIS technical team and used as appropriate in the preparation of the Draft EIS. Additional issues may arise which will be considered and included for analysis as appropriate.

COMMENTS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THIS EIS

Impacts of Previous Drawdowns

- Banks Lake
 - The perch and crappie fishery suffered and is just now recovering
 - The muskrat population was almost starved to nothing
 - The exposed milfoil was not burned
- Coulee City
 - No water in swimming area
 - Boat launch unusable
 - Took 5 years to recover the loss of revenue from the Community Park alone with just a 1-year drawdown
- Sunbanks Resort
 - Shoreline (over 4,000 ft) was all mud and clay
 - Unable to launch boats at marina
 - Significantly reduced business at peak times
- Public perception
 - Unable to launch boats on Banks Lake
 - Unable to use recreation facilities
- Local area
 - Detrimental effects on recreation in August
 - Tourists/visitors did not come to the area; businesses and communities lost revenue

NEPA Process

- Describe the context of this project and how it fits in with other existing and proposed actions of Reclamation and other agencies in the Columbia River Basin including:
 - The impetus behind writing of the 2000 BO
 - A list of action items in the 2000 BO Reclamation is responsible for
 - An explanation of Reclamation's and NMFS's NEPA compliance responsibilities for action items in the 2000 BO and an indication if NMFS is a cooperating agency
 - A statement differentiating the recently completed Resource Management Plan and the contents of the proposed EIS for the drawdown
 - A description of the scope of the EIS detailing whether the EIS would encompass all aspects of operating the reservoir or whether it would be limited to those aspects affected by the drawdown. The rationale behind the scope.
 - A description of the level of discretion Reclamation has in responding to the 2000 BO
- Define the issues.
- Include the full range of reasonable alternatives including those not within the jurisdiction of Reclamation. The number of alternatives should be based on the number necessary to fully disclose different levels of environmental impacts to affected resources.
- Include appropriate mitigation measures.
- Provide a clear basis for choice among the alternatives.
- Include a discussion of the reasons why other alternatives were eliminated.
- Request by Grant County Board of Commissioners to participate as a cooperating agency
- Ensure the effects of the decision are fully and adequately considered on the physical environment, customs, culture, and tax base of the local area.

- Consider the relationship of the proposed action to state/local plans, laws, etc.
- Will the drawdowns continue for the length of the BO or until delisting/ extinction?
- Will there be opportunities for mid-course reviews and adjustments?
- How will we find out if there actually is a benefit to the fish from the drawdown?
- Consider relationship of this action to BiOp Action Item 14 (cooler water supplementation)
- Public meetings should be publicized at least 2 weeks in advance of being held.
- Who will make the final decision on whether to draw down Banks Lake and this EIS?
- A 1-year study is not adequate to determine the biological effects, e.g., warm water fish recruitment
- Is a local formally organized group needed/more effective in this process?
- What is the involvement of Tacoma/Seattle City Light in this study?
- How many years has flow augmentation been going on?

Preliminary Alternatives

- Salmon in the Columbia River wouldn't benefit from the small additional flow afforded by drawing down Banks Lake.
- Strong general opposition to drawdowns, especially in August
- Will the 10-ft drawdown occur when flows in the Columbia are above normal?
- Suspicion of even deeper drawdowns being required in the future. Suspicion of NMFS intentions
- The Banks Lake Drawdown is a Super Super idea. Very exciting!
- If this drawdown was in addition to some other beneficial effort, i.e., Eurasian milfoil eradication, needed lake infrastructure repair, etc., then this drawdown would be a lot more palatable.
- I would not be opposed to the drawdown if it does not effect spawning or cut down on living area of the warm water fish stocks.

Suggested Additional Alternatives

- From full pool, a 5-ft drawdown of Banks Lake in August; don't refill until the following spring.
- The Bureau should operate in a range that never goes below 1560. This would result in an operating range for drawdown of between 1560 and 1562 feet elevation.

Consultation

- Hold formal consultation with affected tribal leaders and officials that is distinctly separate from the NEPA scoping process to ensure Reclamation fully complies with Executive Order 13084 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments).

Infrastructure

- Identify effects on lakebed power lines, including potential for damage and deterioration.
- Identify effects of wave action on the stability of roadway foundations where they abut the lake.

Soils

- Identify changes in elevation of wind and wave erosion on sedimentation and erosion rates.

Water

- Summarize the purpose and content of the Memorandum of Agreement and Understanding between Reclamation, EPA, and the Washington State Department of Ecology concerning water quality.
- Identify users of water diverted from Banks Lake during the period of drawdown, impacts to them, and potential mitigation measures, e.g., conservation techniques (changing irrigation methods) to help alleviate water shortages felt by irrigators.
- Describe the quantity of water and how it works its way through the Columbia Basin Project.
- Identify the impacts to water temperature in Banks Lake and the Columbia River.
- How long does it take for Banks Lake to go down 5/10 ft in August? How long to refill after the 5-/10-ft drawdown?
- Identify the impacts of several years of drought on the drawdown/refill schedule.
- What is the percent of water from the drawdown to the total flow of the Columbia?
- Identify impacts to groundwater wells in the area.
- Determine whether the drawdown would cause a shift in the hydrologic regime (both surface and groundwater).
- Consider the likely refill schedules for a 5- and a 10-ft drawdown.
- Provide the drawdown schedule and amounts (in feet below high water).

Power

- Identify impacts to power generation and storage.
- Evaluate and quantify the changes in hydropower production at both Grand Coulee and Main Canal Headworks as a result of the 5- and 10-ft drawdown.
- Will the drawdown increase demand for alternative power generation units, e.g., diesel powered generators?
- Explain how changes in generation affect Northwest ratepayers.
- Quantify the additional power BPA will receive from the extra flow.

Operation and Maintenance

- Analyze the effects on pumping and pump-generating activities at Grand Coulee for the 5- and 10-ft drawdowns.
 - Will the number of starts and stops increase or decrease?
 - Will operation and maintenance costs to irrigation and/or hydropower increase or decrease? Who pays?
- How far down does the water level in Banks Lake have to be for maintenance? How often?

Vegetation

- Identify potential for changes in noxious weed invasions.
- If the 10-ft drawdown causes a shift in the hydrologic regime (surface and groundwater), identify the effect on the emergent and scrub-shrub wetlands at Banks Lake and Sun Lakes State Park.
- Identify short and long term impacts to riparian revegetation projects.

Fish

- Identify the effects on the fishery.
- Identify effects on the estuary at Northrup Creek.
- Identify effects to the fry.
- Identify losses of fish through conduits, entrainment.
- Identify water temperature impacts to fish in the lake and in the Columbia River.
- Identify areas of and impacts to stranded fish, e.g., Osborn Bay.

- Identify impacts to native fish, especially the channel catfish in the Osborn Bay area.
- Identify impacts of exposure of prime spiny ray habitat on forage fish and the walleye fishery.
- There's no fish ladder at Chief Joseph or Grand Coulee, so how's this going to help the salmon?
- For the first time in many years, silver fishing in Banks Lake is again present.
- Identify fishery impacts at other lakes affected by the drawdown of Banks Lake
- Identify impacts to the fish pens and their fish, including the spiny ray.

Wildlife

- Identify impacts to amphibians.
- Identify effects on the roosting colony of bats near the mouth of Northrup Canyon.
- Identify effects on the estuary at Northrup Creek.
- Quantify and evaluate the consumptive and nonconsumptive effects to wildlife.
- Banks Lake also provides a lot of habitat that indirectly substitutes where it has been lost elsewhere due to various land use practices.
- Identify effects on shoreline-using species from loss of cover and food.

Threatened & Endangered Species

- Identify impacts to all listed plant and wildlife species associated with changes in shoreline riparian and wetland areas.

Cultural Resources

- Identify impacts including potential for looting and loss of site integrity.

Health & Safety

- Identify boating hazards created by drawdown.
- Identify increases in fire hazards from loss of vegetation.

Recreation

- Identify and analyze impacts to all Banks Lake recreation facilities.
- August is the peak of the recreation season.
- Would the "bathtub-ring" effect caused by the drawdown cause recreationists to relocate to other, more scenic areas?
- There will be a loss of good public relations with the recreating public who use Banks Lake extensively.
- The Coulee City boat basin is only 12 ft deep; a 2-ft depth will leave a weed-choked waterway, usable by only very small craft.
- The 5-ft drawdowns of previous years have already had a detrimental effect on recreation in August.
- Identify recreation impacts at other lakes affected by the drawdown of Banks Lake.

Irrigation

- Suspicion that Banks Lake drawdowns could hurt farmers. Identify the potential impacts to the Columbia Basin Project irrigation operations.
- Including the probabilities of, responses to and likely results of catastrophes at Grand Coulee, such as last summer's fire and prolonged pump outage, for both a 5- and a 10-ft drawdown.

Economics

- Analyze impacts to local economy.
- Identify changes to BPA revenues.

- Much of the local tourism comes from the west side of the state.
- Income is lost because of the public perception that the lakes are dry or unusable.
- Local businesses are promoting Banks Lake as a recreation/vacation destination.
- An adverse impact on attendance at State Park facilities would negatively impact generated revenues, reducing funds available to operate these facilities.
- Quantify the benefits to listed species in the Columbia River resulting from both a 5- and a 10-ft drawdown.
- Quantify and evaluate changes to hydropower generation, facilities, and utilities.
- Identify the impacts to power rate payers
- Identify the economic impacts on homeowners, farmers, and the health of the community.
- Identify the economic impacts of the loss of fishery due to overfishing at other lakes affected by the Banks Lake drawdown
- Timing of the drawdown will determine economic impacts to the local area and the time and rate of recovery.
- Identify and quantify the changes in O&M costs and charges.

Social Values

- People are more important than salmon. Too many resources have been spent on salmon in the Northwest, sometimes ineffectively.
- I'm just a fisherman and former trapper and I hate to see you screw the Lake again.
- While I can foresee that the 10-ft drawdown may cause temporary problems for critters living in and around the lake—including people—saving endangered salmon runs is the No. 1 priority.
- We enjoy Banks Lake because of the many water-related recreational activities provided. Over the years our vacation gatherings at Banks Lake have provided thousands of hours of priceless, high-quality family time spanning three generations. A drawdown of 10 ft will adversely affect these activities, or eliminate them completely. The 5-ft drawdowns of previous years have already had a detrimental effect on the recreation at Banks Lake in August. Any further degradation caused by a greater drawdown is unacceptable.
- Killing fish on one lake to save fish elsewhere doesn't make sense.
- For no more water than this will supply at McNary Dam, I believe the negative impact on our community will be deplorable.

Mitigation

- How will local businesses and communities be compensated for any financial losses resulting from the drawdown?
- Identify mitigation for fish and wildlife losses related to dewatering of shoreline and wetland habitats.
- Grants will be needed to deepen boat basins and extend boat ramps.
- Creation of deep water habitat enhancement at Potholes Reservoir to offset overfishing by Banks Lake angler substitution.

COMMENTS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THIS EIS

The purpose of this project is to enhance the probability of meeting target flows in the Columbia River at McNary Dam during the juvenile outmigration of Endangered Species Act listed salmonid stocks by altering the August drawdown of Banks Lake from elevation 1565 down to elevation 1560, to comply with Action No. 31 of the Reasonable and Prudent Alternative of the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion, issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on December 21, 2000.

Some comments fall outside the scope of this EIS, because they do not address the purpose of this project. Others fall outside the scope, because other actions address them.

Here is a summary of comments outside the scope of this EIS:

Comments That Do Not Address the Purpose of this Project

- Tap the Project water at Pasco and return it to the river
- Stop all fishing for salmon for 20 years
- If salmon is endangered, it is by the harvesting being done in the ocean, the fishing in the river, the seals and terns
- As far as I'm aware, more damage is being done downstream (e.g., arctic tern). I really have read very little about water enhancement being a great boon to endangered fish species.
- The local economy has already suffered from the effects of drawing down Lake Roosevelt; effects that have not been published to our knowledge

Comments That Other Actions Address

- Draw Lake Roosevelt down a foot rather than draw Banks Lake down an additional five feet
- Provide the demonstrated scientific basis for the need for additional water for Columbia River fish
- Provide the demonstrated scientific basis for the need for additional water for Columbia River fish

Miscellaneous

- Surprised the drawdown will not occur in 2001 because of the shortage of snowpack and forecasted low flow
- Does NMFS have a monitoring program for supplementation water?
- A need for additional Columbia River flows has not been demonstrated scientifically
- Disclose water quality impacts including temperature impacts to the Columbia River from releasing reservoir water back into it. (*Note: This project does not propose to release water from Banks Lake into the Columbia River; instead, it proposes to increase Columbia River flows by pumping less water into Banks Lake from the Columbia River.*)
- How long does it take for water to get from FDR Lake to McNary Dam?
- Identify changes in lake levels at Potholes Reservoir, Moses Lake, etc., because of the drawdown
- Will diesel-powered generators using Banks Lake water be affected by the 10-ft drawdown?
- It doesn't make sense to decrease water levels on Banks to support salmon downstream on the Columbia.
- We ought to stop all fishing for salmon for a while. This is the only endangered species with a two-a-day limit.

- As we have seen from the Klamath Basin situation, water rights mean nothing to NMFS. What is 5 feet this year becomes something more the next year.
- The Town of Coulee City requests reimbursement of \$35,000 per year for lost revenue for each year Banks Lake is drawn down
- Provide an annual proactive, in-advance public information program to let people statewide know even though the lake is down, recreation opportunities are still available
- Other freshwater lakes could be stocked a little heavier to mitigate for loss of fish in Banks Lake

Notice of Intent

2. *Prescribed Fire Use:* The use of prescribed fire is currently an area of public concern due to recent publicity over escaped burns in Los Alamos and California. The Elko District could benefit from prescribed fire use in high fuel load areas to reduce the potential impacts from severe wildland fire and to improve habitat. Local residents need to be involved with all prescribed fire planning and support any proposed prescribed fire projects.

3. *Conversion of Sagebrush Habitat:* Wildlife managers throughout the Great Basin are concerned over the precipitous decline in sage grouse numbers in recent years, thus causing an increased demand for the protection of sagebrush habitat throughout Elko District. Wildfire can both improve and devastate sage grouse habitat. Managing this habitat in view of competing resource uses and the spread of invasive, nonnative weeds throughout the district is a challenge for local land managers.

4. *Emergency Fire Rehabilitation (EFR):* Some EFR procedures are controversial, including fencing recently burned and/or rehabilitated areas to prevent grazing on fragile re-vegetation, as well as seeding with non-native grass species which out-compete noxious weeds and cheatgrass. Fencing burned areas in wild horse Herd Management Areas can disrupt movement of wild horses and are not popular with wild horse advocacy groups. Livestock owners are also concerned about the economic impacts of some EFR projects on their livelihood.

5. *Forest Resources:* Declining forest resources throughout the district put remaining stands at risk. Some stands need fire to insure forest ecosystem health. However, extensive fuels buildup could cause high intensity fires, leading to stand replacement as well as firefighter safety issues. In addition, Native Americans have concerns over the health of pinyon pine tree stands, since the tree and its fruit are important in maintaining their traditions.

6. *Invasive, Nonnative Weeds:* The significant resources required to fight noxious weed and cheatgrass invasions requires the cooperation of all landowners in affected areas in the district. Wildfire management is one of the most important factors affecting the spread of these weeds in the Elko District.

7. *Fire Suppression Costs and Effect on Local Rural Economies:* Although high suppression costs affect all taxpayers, many local rural communities depend heavily on the influx of dollars from fire suppression efforts. Less fire suppression could lead

to the saving of tax dollars and the possible improvement of some habitat values, however, several local economies may be negatively impacted by any changes.

8. *Community Assistance:* Better communication, training, and cooperation with local communities would aid in reducing the threat from wildfire in the wildland urban interface, reduce arson, trespass, and negligence occurrence, and encourage fire prevention.

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610) require preparation of planning criteria to guide development of all resource management plans, revisions, and amendments. Planning criteria are based on: standards prescribed by applicable laws and regulations; agency guidance; the result of consultation and coordination with the public and other Federal, State and local agencies and governmental entities and Native American tribes; analysis of information pertinent to the planning area; and professional judgement. The following preliminary criteria were developed internally and will be reviewed by the public before being used in the amendment/EA process. After analysis of public input, they will become proposed criteria, and can be added to or changed as issues are addressed or new information is presented. The Elko Field Manager will approve all planning criteria, as well as any proposed changes:

- The fire management RMP amendment will be completed in compliance with FLPMA and all other applicable laws and regulations.
- The Elko Field Office Planning Interdisciplinary Team will work cooperatively with the State of Nevada, tribal governments, county and municipal governments, other Federal agencies, and all other interested groups, agencies, and individuals. Public participation will be encouraged throughout the planning process.
- The RMP amendment will establish the fire management guidance upon which the BLM will rely in managing the Elko District, for the life of both the Elko and Wells RMPs.
- The RMP amendment process will include an Environmental Assessment that will comply with all National Environmental Policy Act standards.
- The RMP amendment will emphasize the protection and enhancement of Elko District natural resources, while at the same time providing the public with opportunities for use of these resources.
- The lifestyles and concerns of area residents, including livestock grazing,

recreational uses, and other land uses, will be recognized in the amendment.

- Any lands located within the Elko District administrative boundary which are acquired by the BLM, will be managed consistent with the amendment, subject to any constraints associated with the acquisition.
- The amendment will recognize the State's responsibility to manage wildlife.
- The amendment will incorporate the Nevada Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines and be consistent with the Nevada Sage Grouse Management Guidelines.
- The planning process will involve Native American tribal governments and will provide strategies for the protection of recognized traditional uses.
- Decisions in the amendment will strive to be consistent with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, State, Tribal and Federal agencies, to the extent consistent with Federal law.

Freedom of Information Act
Considerations: Public comments submitted for this planning amendment, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review and disclosure at the Elko Field Office during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Dated: April 6, 2001.

Helen Hankins,
Elko Field Manager.

[FR Doc. 01-10210 Filed 4-24-01; 8:45am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Banks Lake Drawdown, Columbia Basin Project, Washington

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) proposes to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate impacts of altering existing operations at Banks Lake to provide for an annual drawdown of up to 10 feet from full pool to enhance flows in the Columbia River during the juvenile out migration of salmonid stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act. The proposed drawdown would occur in August and the elevation of the surface water would remain constant from August 31st through December 31st. This action would constitute a change in existing operations, although it is within existing operating authorization. The proposed drawdown is being evaluated in response to Action item 31 of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on December 21, 2000.

DATES: A scoping meeting to identify issues to be evaluated in the EIS will be held at:

- Coulee City, WA: May 15, 2001, 7 to 9 p.m.

Written comments will be accepted through May 31, 2001 for inclusion in the scoping summary document. Requests for sign language interpretation for the hearing impaired or other auxiliary aids should be submitted to Jim Blanchard as indicated under **ADDRESSES** by May 8, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Comments and requests to be added to the mailing list may be submitted to Bureau of Reclamation, Ephrata Field Office, Attention: James Blanchard, 32 C Street, Box 815, Ephrata, WA 98823.

The scoping meeting will be held at the following location:

- Coulee City Middle School Gym, 312 E. Main Street, Coulee City, WA.

Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from public disclosure, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold a respondent's identity from public disclosure, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of

organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

James Blanchard, Bureau of Reclamation, telephone: (509) 754-0226, fax: (509) 754-0239. The hearing impaired may contact Mr. Blanchard at the above number via a toll free TTY relay: (800) 833-6388. The meeting facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Please direct requests for sign language interpretation for the hearing impaired, or other special needs, to James Blanchard at the telephone numbers indicated above by May 8, 2001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Banks Lake is operated as a re-regulation reservoir for the Columbia Basin Project (CBP). The reservoir is approximately 27 miles long and contains slightly more than one million acre feet of water at full pool. The water supply for the reservoir is stored behind Grand Coulee Dam and is lifted from Franklin Delano Roosevelt Reservoir into Banks Lake. Water is delivered into the Main Canal at Dry Falls Dam on the southern end of Banks Lake and from there delivered to approximately 670,000 acres. This is just over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the authorized lands for the CBP. Although Reclamation is currently authorized to operate the reservoir down to 5 feet below full pool, for the past 5 years it has been operated at close to full pool throughout the year to increase the generating capability of the pump/generators at Grand Coulee. Previous operations were within the top two feet of full pool during irrigation season and then drawing the reservoir level down five feet during the non-irrigation season.

Action 31 of the FCRPS Biological Opinion calls for the assessment of operation of Banks Lake at up to 10 feet below full pool beginning in August of each year. Refill would occur from January through April. The reduction of pumping into Banks Lake will increase the amount of water available to support endangered salmonid stocks in the Columbia River.

Public Involvement

Reclamation is requesting public comment to help identify the significant issues and reasonable alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. Reclamation will summarize comments received during the scoping meeting and from letters of comment received during the scoping period, identified under **DATES**, into a scoping summary document. This scoping summary will be sent to all who

responded during the scoping period, and also will be made available to the public upon request.

Dated: April 19, 2001.

J. Eric Glover,

Acting Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region.

[FR Doc. 01-10218 Filed 4-24-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MN-P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Drug Enforcement Administration

**Importer of Controlled Substances;
Notice of Registration**

By notice dated August 18, 2000, and published in the **Federal Register** on September 6, 2000, (65 FR 54071) Salsbury Chemicals, Inc., 1205 11th Street, Charles City, Iowa 50616-3466, made application to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to be registered as an importer of phenylacetone (8501), a basic class of controlled substance listed in Schedule II.

The firm plans to import phenylacetone to manufacture amphetamine for distribution to its customers.

No comments or objections have been received. DEA has considered the factors in title 21, United States Code, section 823(a) and determined that the registration of Salsbury Chemicals, Inc. is consistent with the public interest and with United States obligations under international treaties, conventions, or protocols in effect on May 1, 1971, at this time. DEA has investigated Salsbury Chemicals, Inc. to ensure that the company's continued registration is consistent with the public interest. This investigation included inspection and testing of the company's physical security systems, verification of the Company's compliance with state and local laws, and a review of the company's background and history. Therefore, pursuant to section 1008(a) of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act and in accordance with title 21, Code of Federal Regulations, section 1301.34, the above firm is granted registration as an importer of the basic class of controlled substance listed above.

Dated: April 13, 2001.

Laura M. Nagel,

Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Administration.

[FR Doc. 01-10257 Filed 4-24-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410-09-M

Meeting Notice

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING ON BANKS LAKE DRAWDOWN

Please come to the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) scoping meeting to get information about the potential drawdown of Banks Lake in north west Washington State. Reclamation will present alternatives being considered to draw the lake down up to 10 feet and provide opportunities to identify issues and concerns associated with the proposed alternatives or identify other alternatives for the Banks Lake drawdown. This scoping meeting is **not** part of the Banks Lake Resource Management Plan Environmental Assessment.

WHEN AND WHERE

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2001

COULEE CITY

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Coulee City Middle School
Gym

312 East Main Street
Coulee City, Washington
(509) 632-5312

DIRECTIONS:

From State Highway 22, turn south at 4th Street — the Main Entrance to Coulee City. Continue south for five blocks to Main Street (the post office is on the east corner). Turn east on Main Street. Continue east on Main Street for five blocks. Main Street ends at the Coulee City Middle School. Parking is available in front of the main entrance to the school. After entering the building, proceed straight to the gym.

BACKGROUND

Action 31 of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) Biological Opinion, issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on December 21, 2000, calls for the assessment of operation of Banks Lake at up to 10 feet below full pool during August of each year. The reduction of pumping into Banks Lake will increase the amount of water available to support endangered salmonid stocks in the Columbia River.

This action would constitute a change in existing operations, although it is within existing operating authorization. Reclamation is currently authorized to operate the reservoir down to 5 feet below full pool; however, for the past 5 years it has been operated at close to full pool throughout the year to increase the generating capability of the pump/generators at Grand Coulee. Previous operations were within the top 2 feet of full pool during irrigation season, and then the reservoir level was drawn down 5 feet during the nonirrigation season.

BANKS LAKE

Banks Lake is operated as a re-regulation reservoir for the Columbia Basin Project (CBP). The reservoir is approximately 27 miles long and contains slightly more than 1 million acre-

feet of water at full pool. The water supply for the reservoir is stored behind Grand Coulee Dam and is lifted from Franklin Delano Roosevelt Reservoir into Banks Lake. Water is delivered into the Main Canal at Dry Falls Dam on the southern end of Banks Lake and from there delivered to approximately 670,000 acres. This is just over one-half of the authorized lands for the CBP.

WHAT RECLAMATION IS DOING

Reclamation is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The No Action Alternative will be the current operation, which is a 5-foot drawdown in August for fish flows as called for by Action 23 of the December 21, 2001, FCRPS Biological Opinion. Under NEPA, impacts of this alternative must be evaluated and will form the basis for comparison of impacts among the action alternatives. A range of action alternatives to draw the lake down 10 feet during August of each year will be developed. The draft EIS will evaluate impacts of these alternatives compared to the No Action Alternative.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

ATTEND THE SCOPING MEETING

We need your interest and input to help address this action. Please come to the public scoping meeting and share your thoughts with us. A scoping summary describing issues identified at the scoping meeting, and in written comments received, will be developed and made available to the public. If you are unable to attend, please send us your written comments on the attached sheet by May 31, 2001.

The meeting facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Please direct requests for sign language interpretation for the hearing impaired, or other special needs, to Jim Blanchard, Bureau of Reclamation at telephone (509) 754-0226, or fax (509) 754-0239. The hearing impaired may contact Mr. Blanchard at the above number via a toll free TTY relay at (800) 833-6388.

PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS

If you would like to be on the mailing list, provide a comment, or request a copy of the draft EIS, you can send the attached comment sheet in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

**IF WE DO NOT HEAR FROM YOU,
WE WILL REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM THIS MAILING LIST.**

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, YOU MAY CONTACT:

Jim Blanchard
Special Projects Officer
Bureau of Reclamation
32 C Street, Box 815
Ephrata, WA 98823
telephone: (509) 754-0226
fax: (509) 754-0239

BANKS LAKE DRAWDOWN COMMENT SHEET AND DRAFT EIS REQUEST FORM

Please provide your comments below and return them in the enclosed postage paid envelope by May 31, 2001, for inclusion in the scoping summary document.

Note: You can request to withhold your name and/or address by stating this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety.

If you want to be on the mailing list, please **print** your:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Optional Phone _____

Optional Fax _____

Optional E-mail _____

Do you want to receive a copy of the draft EIS? yes____ no____

What format: cd-rom (with built in reader) ____ paper copy ____ executive summary only ____

Comments:

Please continue your comments on the back of this sheet and add additional sheets if desired.

Please return sheet(s) in the enclosed postage paid envelope OR you may fax them to:

Jim Blanchard, Special Projects Officer, Bureau of Reclamation, fax: (509) 754-0239.

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**Please return sheet(s) in the enclosed postage paid envelope OR you may fax them to:
Jim Blanchard, Special Projects Officer, Bureau of Reclamation at (509) 754-0239.**